*All Quiet on the Western Front* byErich Maria Remarque

Section: Pages 51-99

The story picks up with the Second Company being assigned to place new barbwire along the front line. While completing their task, the men are assaulted by shells. As the men are being bombarded with shells and gas the narrator risks his own life to make sure the new recruits are safe and are properly using their equipment. Once the commotion ceases the men get out of the safety locations only to view the wreckage that has been left by enemy. After the bombing stops and Second Company make it back to camp the narrator and his friends were back to causing trouble in Second Company, by continuing to defy orders and being a nuisance to Himelstoss. Himelstoss has had enough of the practical jokes and has gotten higher authorities to punish any of the men that deliberately defy the orders that are given. The men also speak of the end of the war and the individual plans of the men for when they return home.

Analysis:

I believed this section of reading really started to pick up and give the reader a vivid understanding of World War I. The author is starting to show the harshness of war but also a larger role of leadership and responsibility. The narrator, although still being at a young age had left his safe spot to make sure recruits had helmets, gas masks, and made sure they did not stay out in the open where they would easily be obliterated. Although the Second Company experienced another close call, Remarque allowed his character to still express their comical sides, by continuing to be wise to their superior officers. I enjoy the humor portrayed in the character, because I think it keeps the reader entertained and leaving him wondering what the character will do next to get in the head of Corporal Himelstoss.

Application:

The Second Company has had a little more experience on the front and had some close encounters. I still believe that the soldiers still have faith of the war ending. The soldiers’ morale still seems fairly high. Death still has not directly affected the characters yet and they are often still cheery after fighting off an attack from the enemy. Many members of the Second Company are still fairly young, so the war is almost a growing experience for them to become a man when returning home form the war.